

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

An average verdict, if we may so call it, affording a precedent of rather a novel order, lately resulted from the laying of twelve sagacious heads together in a jury-box at the Maidstone assizes. One of the twelve, during a dispute among the corps as to the precise amount of damages to which the plaintiff was entitled in the case of Gardener, of the Globe Tavern, Mills End-road, near Bow, against the directors of the North Woolwich Railway Company, for trespass, suggested that they should take the average of the aggregate of the amount of damages to which each thought the plaintiff entitled, by dividing it by twelve, which was accordingly done, and the average result, 137*l.*, was actually given in and recorded as their [unanimous?] verdict! If the immaculate twelve could only estimate the precise amount of guilt by taking the average of the aggregate amount of the twelve enlightened ideas on that score, much difficulty and involuntary fasting, at least, might be avoided by this new sort of unanimity in verdicts, and perhaps after all an sagacious result be frequently arrived at, minus all the trouble, absurdity, and compulsion occasioned by the conflict between empty stomachs and stubborn scruples of conscience. — In *Robertson's Monthly Railway Record* there is a rather curious account of the difficulties and dangers which the South-Western Company have had to encounter in threading their way towards the metropolitan terminus of their line amongst lookers-out for compensation. Thus, for instance, a draper in Westminster-road made the modest demand of 120,000*l.* for the plant and goodwill of his business, after causing much expense and delay. Rapacity, in this instance, however, overreached its own mark, for the liberal offers which had been pertinaciously refused were at length withdrawn, and "a deviation of a few yards" at once dissolved the bright visions of Aladdin's lamp. Another worthy, a dealer in bacon and cheese, whose whole concern, "gnod-will" and all, would not have realized 1,500*l.*, demanded nearly 5,000*l.*; but a jury awarded less than the Company offered, namely, half the sum; and the very next day after vacating the premises, the bacon provision merchant made "a deviation of a few yards" on his own account, and re-established himself at once into the well-disposed-of "gnod-will" of his own business, — an article which he is probably, like the dog-dealer with his stock-cur, as ready to dispose of to advantage over again as ever. The Company have already expended 3,000,000*l.* of money on their line from the coast to Nine Elms, and after reducing their fares to a minimum, have engaged to expend 800,000*l.* more in extending it, through densely-populated and noxious neighbourhoods, to the very centre of the metropolis. Owing to the opposition just instanced, however, the capital required will considerably exceed 1,000,000*l.* — The express trains between Paddington and Exeter are to be accelerated in speed to the rate of 48½ miles an hour, including stoppages, so as to complete the distance in 4 hours instead of 4½ as heretofore. — A contract for 1,000 houses has lately been entered into, to be built at Stratford, chiefly for the convenience of persons in the employment of the Eastern Counties Railway, who intend to remove their workshops and manufactories there, and to call it Stratford New Town. Preparations are also being made for the erection of a large number of houses on an eligible site near the next station on the line at Ilford, to which the name of Ilford-new-Railway will be given. — The station at Ely is to be lengthened 60 feet. — The Trent Valley line was traversed, first time, by Mr. Brassy, the chief contractor, on the 16th instant. Except a portion at Stafford, the line is said to be all sufficiently completed. The Tamworth station is a large building in the Elizabethan style. — The bridge of the Sheffield and Great Grimaby, which is to cross the Trent about a mile above Gainsford, has made considerable progress. A great number of piles have been driven, but orders were received a few days since that the works should be suspended. The bridge, according to the present plan, was to cross the river at an inclination of 40 degrees, but it seems that the Trent Company are desirous that it should cross it at right angles. To effect this, it is proposed to direct

the course of the current into a new channel, and cut off a long curve in the river. A plan was some time ago proposed by Mr. Lister (late of Doncaster), the architect of the contractors, to change the course of the line of railway itself, and to cross the river about 100 yards lower than at present proposed, which it would at right angles, as required. — The viaduct of 300 yards at Leeds, on the Leeds, Dewsbury and Manchester, is to be put under contract. — The works for widening the entrance of the Manchester and Liverpool into Liverpool are proceeding rapidly at Olive Mount and Broad Green. — The Kendal and Windermere line was favourably inspected by Captain Symmons, on Wednesday week. The public opening was announced for the Monday following. As might be expected from the nature of the lake district, this line presents a quick succession of cuttings and embankments. The chief difficulties were those presented by the rock cuttings at Bowston, and on the brink of the descent into the vale of Windermere. The cutting at this summit amounts to more than 90,000 cubic yards. Another difficulty, by-the-bye, originated in the want of sufficient accommodation in so rural and solitary a district for those scarcely fashionable "lake visitors," the "navvies." The number of men employed on the line has, at times, amounted to about 1,100, and of horses to 95, but the horse-power has latterly been superseded by a locomotive. The contract has been executed by Messrs. John Stephenson and Co., under the direction of Mr. Harris, the company's engineer. — It is alleged that one gentleman engaged in the direction of the Maryport and Carlisle line is partly solicitor to the company, and moreover auditor of their accounts, and that another took upon himself the supply of paper, while a third, with a very appropriate name, supplies it with wood or timber. We wonder whether the auditor taxes the lawyer's accounts for business which the director orders to be performed. These do not appear to be the first abuses alleged against parties connected with this surely somewhat loosely-conducted line; for lately a contractor was charged with improperly presenting a cask of wine, and a late confidential and leading official with receiving it. — The carriages on the Caledonian line, it seems, are to be "a pattern worthy of imitation." They are to be as high as to admit of standing room, and to have double bottoms with felt stuffing, as a non-conductor of both noise and cold. The second class ones, too, are to be lined interiorly with polished mahogany, and have stuff-bottomed seats, plate-glass doors, side lights, and interior lamps, but without "arm chair" divisions, which number two will doubtless willingly resign to number one under such circumstances. Indeed, it is said that the difference of classes will consist in little else than the prestige appertaining to the fashion of the day, and of course to the difference of price. Even the third class carriages are to have plate-glass windows and interior lamps, though less decoration, but equally well secured from the weather. — While perusing an intimation in the *Berwick Warrier*, that the North British station at Castlegate, Berwick, was showing unequivocal symptoms of instability or decay, and was to be partly taken down and rebuilt, we felt half persuaded that the station alluded to, though called a British station, was more probably some old Roman station, which had stood the battle and the breeze of centuries, but had at length succumbed to that mighty power which not even vitrified forts or Roman re-licent can for ever withstand. But the less equivocal allusion to the same noble edifice as "the railway station-house" at once dispelled our illusion, and assured us of the melancholy fact that it was no rude structure reared by our barbarous old ancestors — British or Roman — but an edifice possessing all the accumulative advantages of their still more old and more mature posterity, which had thus been at length compelled to bend its noble head before the breeze at least, if not the battle, of the busy bustling nineteenth century. A "temporary" office is to be erected till the permanent station shall have been restored. — The excavations for the Lyons Railway have brought to light, not far from the gates of Melun, a number of tombs of great interest to the antiquary. At a depth of no more than two feet, eighteen stone sarcophagi have been

discovered. The chests and simple form and the large dimensions of these sarcophagi are said to give them a majestic and imposing appearance. They run from east to west. A number of medals, vases, arms, and other objects, have been discovered near them.

— The atmospheric line of rail from Paris to St. Germain, was inaugurated and opened for traffic on Wednesday week. — King Louis Philippe, it is said, intends forming a short line at his own cost from Corbeil to Fontainebleau, for the holiday convenience of the Parisians who might thus run to or fro in a couple of hours. — A Carlsruhe mechanic is said to have invented a new locomotive for steep gradients of 22 feet per mile, to facilitate the construction of the proposed line from Carlsruhe to Switzerland. — The line from Warsaw to Moscow has been approved at St. Petersburg, and General Deln, the builder of the Warsaw Citadel, has been instructed to undertake its formation. It is to join near Moscow with the St. Petersburg line, which is to be completed to Moscow in the autumn of next year. Besides the local peasants, 50,000 workmen are to be employed on this latter line. Another from Moscow to Odesa is contemplated. — An American visitor to "the old country," while contrasting American with British lines of railway, in the *New York Tribune* remarks, that "the English railways are admirable. The roads are infinitely superior to ours. The country being old, the soil has got consistency, and is not afflicted with that pulpy sponginess that characterises the surface of a new country. You will find no enduring post-roads here as in Georgia or Alabama, nor lines of rail over which milk may be churned to butter every five miles. Indeed, the roads ought to be good — a country small in extent, thickly, and densely populated, with a thousand years of age and enormous wealth — besides being continually well tared, should present some perfection in road-making, more than could be expected from a partial wilderness thirty times its size, and as yet hardly drained of a morass."

THE THOUSAND POUNDS—PRIZE PAINTINGS.

In reply to the long advertised premium of 1,000*l.* for the best oil painting of the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan, not less in size than 12 feet by 10 feet, eleven pictures have been submitted in the proposer of the prize, and are now being exhibited to the (late) Chinese Exhibition Room at Hyde-Park-corner. Some surprise has been expressed that the number is so small; but we do not participate in it; wondering rather that with so little assurance of a satisfactory result, any artists were led to respond to the offer. The artists (if we may venture so to term all the gentlemen who have submitted works), giving them in the order in which the paintings hang, are, — Messrs. Howard, Robertson, Sebbens, Fisk, D. Scott, Hitchings, John Wood, Aylugh, Ziegler, Browning, and Aglio. The majority of them are quite beyond criticism. Mr. Wood's picture would have our vote, were we obliged to give one, but what the decision will really be remains to be seen. The artists were themselves called on first to select the ten best, which they did; they have now to point out the best five, and then from those the giver of the prize will make the final selection. We look with interest on the whole proceeding.

A NEW CATHEDRAL. — The Antiquary papers report a discussion in the House of Assembly, on the motion to grant a further sum of 10,000*l.* for the completion of the cathedral of St. John's; the sum of 33,000*l.* sterling, previously granted, having been found insufficient to finish it. Mr. Ledwith called it "an ill proportioned structure, requiring at least 10 feet additional height, surmounted by two ill-looking resemblances of pepper-boxes." The editor of the *Antiquary Observer* says: "Mr. Ledwith's comparison will doubtless provoke a smile, but so much for its singularity as from its real truthfulness; 33,000*l.* ought to produce a more comely and appropriate structure than the monstrous pile that seems to frown, like some baro-like citadel, upon the summit of our town." The vote, however, was passed.